

Town of Lincoln

Budget Board Meeting

March 13, 2008

Present:

Ken Booth Carl Brunetti Claudette Lussier Linda Noble Bob Ericson

Greg Leonard Jack Newman Cheryl Ethier Sheila Chisholm

Absent:

Roberta Gosselin Joe Renning

The meeting began at 7:40 with the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Budget Board discussed the School Department needing to have a meeting to then submit a budget that falls within the state mandate.

The minutes of March 11th were distributed for review.

Jack Newman made a motion to accept, seconded by Greg Leonard.

The minutes were accepted by a vote of 8-0 with Bob Ericson abstaining because he was not present on March 11th.

Ken Booth opened the meeting to public comments and questions.

Town Council President Jay O'Grady was present, and noted that there was confusion as to when the Town Council line items in the budget would be discussed by the Budget Board, and he noted that

the Town Council did have it on their own agenda to discuss before meeting with the Budget Board.

Ken Booth noted that the Town Council could meet with the Budget Board at the next meeting, Wednesday, March 19th after the Town Administrator who is scheduled to meet with the Budget Board.

Carl Brunetti noted that if the only revenue increase expected is for Medicaid reimbursements, that the town may be allowed to file for an emergency funding for non-property tax lost revenues.

Ken Booth noted that the Department of Municipal Affairs would have to agree to the emergency.

Bob Ericson asked about the status of the \$500,000 surplus from the schools.

Ken Booth noted that if the surplus still exists, they could fund the schools' appropriation at \$500,000 for capital to be done, and that it should be mentioned when the School Department provides the Budget Board with a budget that falls within the state mandate.

The Budget Board broke into School and Municipal Subcommittees and then reconvened.

(Notes from the School Subcommittee Meeting can be found attached)

The Budget Board discussed the upcoming meeting schedule.

On Wednesday, March 19th the Budget Board will meet with the Town

Council at 7:00 pm, and then the Town Administrator.

On Thursday, March 20th the Budget Board will hold the public reading of the budget, followed by a regular meeting.

Ken Booth suggested talking to the Superintendent of Schools to set up a tour to maybe just look at the schools where major work has been done recently or is requested.

The possibility was discussed of having the school tour the same day as the Town Garage tour on April 5th.

Bob Ericson noted that he would email the Town Administrator and the Superintendent of Schools to see if the tours could be arranged on the same day.

Cheryl Ethier noted that the Budget Board would also need a prioritized list of the requested capital improvements from the schools before the tour.

Ken Booth stated that the Budget Board would invite Boards and Commissions to the Budget Board Meeting on March 26th to discuss their individual budgets.

Linda Noble suggested having the Boards and Commissions meet with the Municipal Subcommittee while the School Subcommittee met with the School Department on the same night.

There was a motion to adjourn by Jack Newman, seconded by Greg Leonard.

The meeting adjourned at 9:50 pm.

3/13/08 – School Subcommittee Meeting

The School Subcommittee discussed their findings having gone through the salaries for each individual school.

Sheila Chisholm noted that at Northern Elementary in particular in the 2nd Grade, there appear to be 5 teachers for 69 students, which is too low a student to teacher ratio.

Cheryl Ethier noted that although the spreadsheet given to the Budget Board was the most up-to-date when they first received it, it is not clear if it is still the most up-to-date information. Cheryl stated that she would ask the School Department about enrollment and ratios.

Linda Noble noted that the 6th Grade teachers were previously elementary school teachers but are now certified as secondary education teachers.

Carl Brunetti noted that the positions that were taken out of the requested budget were taken out at lower pay levels even though there really aren't any teachers being paid at those levels, and they should be taken out at their particular higher steps which would mean a larger reduction from the budget.

Linda Noble noted that there are sheets that do not match up to portions of other sheets that should match, but that the totals do

match up.

There was a question about a position that had an \$8,000 increase requested.

Carl Brunetti noted that it was purely a step increase because the last step increase does provide a raise that high.

There was also a question about a position that was requested at a decrease of \$12,000 even though the person in the position increased a step.

Linda Noble noted that in the budget for Fairlawn Early Learning Center, she did not find any numbers for Kindergarten and electricity was requested at a decrease.

Linda Noble believed that there should be a school tour, to see only the schools where things have been done or will be done, but she also believed that the capital improvements list should be prioritized before a tour.

Carl Brunetti noted that if the School Committee does not submit a requested budget within the state mandate by the Public Hearing of the budget, the Budget Board Chairman will present the Town Administrators' requested school budget at that point, which would be a 2% increase with no capital.

Jack Newman noted that the Budget Board should use resolutions

again this year for money meant for capital improvements so that it will be used for what it is intended for.

Bob Ericson believed that the town should sell the current School Administration building and relocate the School Administration to the old middle school, which has been discussed at capital development meetings but not receptively.

Jack Newman noted that there was an article that stated that there was \$176,000 in savings because of fuel efficiency, and he wondered if that was based on the previous year.

Bob Ericson thought that Angelo Mencucci, Head of Grounds & Maintenance, should provide average costs for energy and electricity.

Linda Noble did not believe that the School Subcommittee should continue to analyze individual schools until a budget has been passed by the School Committee that meets the state mandate, because much of what has been analyzed may change or be corrected.

Linda Noble thought that the Subcommittee should ask about the \$500,000 surplus, and whether it has been spent or where it shows in the budget.

Cheryl Ethier added that they should ask what line item in the budget caused the surplus.

Linda Noble asked that the School Department be asked to justify personnel from budgeted to audited expenditures in the 2006-2007 fiscal year.

There is \$102,333 for a Reform Facilitator, and \$33,700 for a Reform Consultant requested.

Linda Noble noted that these positions could be to meet Graduation by Proficiency requirements.

Cheryl Ethier noted that she would ask what the purposes of these positions are.